

VZCZCXRO6007
PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHDH RUEHKUK RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHRB #0907/01 3161329
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 121329Z NOV 09
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0821
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RUCNMGH/MAGHREB COLLECTIVE
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 0002

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RABAT 000907

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR DRL/NESCA AND NEA/PI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/12/2019

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [CA](#) [MO](#)

SUBJECT: CANADA AND DRL DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF THE FORUM FOR
THE FUTURE

Classified By: DCM Robert P. Jackson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) Summary: On the margins of the Forum for the Future (FFF) in Marrakesh, Assistant Deputy Minister Carmen Sylvain met with DRL Assistant Secretary Michael Posner to discuss the future direction of the FFF as Canada takes the G8 presidency. Both parties agreed that the next Forum should be more effective with greater openness to debate and discussion between governments and civil society. They also discussed Canada,s proposed Iran resolution in the UN Third Committee as well as the Goldstone Report. End Summary.

The Future of the Forum

¶2. (SBU) Sylvain noted that she had been Canada,s Ambassador to Morocco five years ago in 2004 when Morocco hosted the first Forum and that she was attending this year to gauge progress since the launch. Although she admitted the Forum was still rather young, Sylvain indicated that the GOC would like to explore the idea of the G8 stepping back from the process, leaving it in the hands of governments and civil society in the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) region. Yet she noted that the Forum has also become a space for different civil society groups from across the region to meet and talk in a relatively "safe" setting. Posner assessed that it is too early for the Forum to operate without the umbrella of the G8. From a civil society angle, Posner stressed that the Forum needs more opportunity for discussion and debate, not a "free-for-all," but more reflective and consensus-based than the current tendency to shut out opposing views. Both parties referenced the resistance of Egypt, as well as resistance from more tolerant countries in the region, to the involvement of civil society as reflecting a need for a continued G8 presence.

¶3. (SBU) On a separate topic, Sylvain noted that a former Canadian Minister of Immigration, who visited Sylvain while she was the Ambassador to Morocco, had been inspired by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) model and projects and that the GOC is setting up a similar institution. A/S Posner recommended that the Canadians contact democracy scholar Thomas Carothers, who is convening an international group on integrating democracy and development with foreign assistance.

Suggestions for Next Year in Qatar

¶4. (SBU) Sylvain said the GOC is reviewing with the Prime Minister possible themes or priorities for its role as co-host with Qatar of the 2010 Forum. They will float the ideas with G8 partners, and will announce decisions after assuming the G8 presidency. To Sylvain,s observation that civil society has reached starkly different maturity levels

in different BMENA countries, Posner suggested more involvement from well-developed "intermediary" NGOs such as Italy,s No Peace Without Justice, which could train other NGOs in effective engagement with governments. On the operational side, they discussed spreading the Forum,s thematic workshops throughout the year to maintain a sense of continuity and agreed that the workshops should continue to be held in the BMENA region, to increase transparency and decrease suspicion of Western "meddling". Posner noted the need for urgent attention to the increasing controls and laws affecting NGOs across the region.

Iran and the United Nations

¶5. (C) Sylvain informed Posner that there had been a great deal of internal debate on the annual Iran resolution in the UN Third Committee, but that Canada would continue to support it as it had in years past. Sylvain stated that the Iranians had acted surprised by the resolution, and she speculated that Iran had expected that international sensitivity on the nuclear issue would have prevented other actors from bringing up human rights this year. She expressed some concern that due to Iran,s strong campaign against the resolution, a large number of no-action motions were expected.

¶6. (C) On the matter of the Palestinian self-determination resolution, Canada has abstained, but Sylvain told Posner that if more balance were brought to the resolution, Canada might support it. Sylvain also affirmed that there is "no way" that Canada would endorse the Goldstone Report.

RABAT 00000907 002 OF 002

¶7. (U) DRL DAS Kay Mayfield has cleared this message.

Visit Embassy Rabat's Classified Website;
<http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Portal:Moro> cco

Kaplan